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tion the cant of the criminal classes in New York and elsewhere, a task which we trust some one will pursue. The existence of thieves' language in China is remarked by Mr. Culin (see the Folk-Lore Scrap-Book). Children, as is known, often employ jargons of their own, apparently made up much in the same manner, using them for the purpose of concealment.

W. W. N.

VERSION OF THE GAME OF THE CHILD-STEALING WITCH (vol. iii. p. 139). — The persons represented are a Mother, many children, and the Old Witch, who is always lame, must carry a stick, and wears a cloak.

The Mother, who is blind, goes out to work, giving each child a piece of sewing, to be done in her absence, represented by the hem of her dress, and which she calls a stint. She bids the children be good, and not let the Old Witch get them. As soon as she leaves, the Old Witch knocks at the door, and asks for fire to light her pipe, saying: "If you don't give it to me, I'll kill you." As the eldest daughter turns to get the fire, the Witch seizes one of the children, and runs away. When the Mother comes back, the children kneel before her, and she puts her hands on their heads, calling them in turn, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, etc. One of the children, slipping down to the end of the line and stooping, simulates the youngest child, who is gone.

This process is repeated until all are gone but one who can no longer keep up the pretence of representing others in addition to herself. The Mother calls out, "O, the Old Witch, has taken all my children! Let us go back for them." She and the daughter go forth, and come to the place where the Old Witch is giving a party. She invites the Mother in. The children are kneeling on the floor, with aprons or dresses over their heads. The Old Witch invites the Mother to taste, saying, "This is Ice-cream," etc., until she comes to a child which she says, is Cherry-pie. The Mother exclaims, "Why, this tastes like my Fanny; how did you get here, child?" The child replies, "My great big toe brought me here;" whereupon all the children start up and run, pursued by the Mother and the Witch. The one whom the Mother catches plays the part of Mother in the next turn, and the one caught by the Witch becomes the new Witch.

Mary H. Skeel.

THE NUMBER TWELVE. Can any one give any explanation of the use of the number twelve, which is employed as a sacred number, and is still preserved in counting our linen, spoons, eggs, and many other things?

Mary H. Skeel, Newburgh, N. Y.

DERIVATION OF NAMES OF FEMALE ACROBATS. — A few days ago the London "Globe" inquired why it was that all the show names of female acrobats begin with Z. My attention was attracted to this many years ago, and I came to the conclusion that all these Zazals, Zamiels, and Zæos, are supplied with "fake names on the slangs," by Hebrew impresarios who have dipped into the Cabala, for they all seem to be derived from Jewish